The Book Factory

By EDWARD ANTHONY.

A DECLARATION OF FAITH.

(Being the credo of George F. Babbitt, apostle of pep and star performer in Sinclair Lewis's corking new novel, "Babbitt.")

I.

The guy with no wallop is due for the can;
If you want to arrive, be a two-fisted man!

II.

There's dozens of knockers on 'most every block;
Just give 'em the "Ha! ha!" and boost while they knock!

III.

There's too many foreigners rooning the nation;
They ain't got no culture and no education,
So it isn't surprising they got no respect
For law and for order. We oughta reject
Nine-tenths of the cattle as fast as they come,
Or they'll pretty soon put Uncle Sam on the bum!

IV.

From nine until closing time hustle, old pard,
And when the work's over with, play just as hard!

V.

Prohibition annoyed me since first it began;
We gotta have Personal Liberty, man!

Of course, it was right to abolish saloons,
Where promising boys became tottering roons.

But we oughta have Beer and Light Wines, I insist.
Don't Drink 'Em Myself—but by others they're missed.

VI.

Of course, it's us business men keeps the world humming,
But there are some others that's got credit coming.
Take authors—they've done lots of good in a way,
So I read one of Frink's pretty pomes every day.

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It should be added that Frink—T. Cholmondeley Frink, to be exact—is the poet laureate of Babbitt's native Zenith, Ohio. Frink's cheery songs—written in prose form—are syndicated to a string of newspapers; and it is obvious that Sinclair Lewis is satirizing Walt Mason. And he does a darned good job of it. In fact, "Babbitt" is as penetrating a satire as any living American has written. And this is said without our overlooking that occasionally it forgets to be satire and is just ire and that now and then there is a caricaturish speech, as when Babbitt says:

"Trouble with a lot of folks is: they're so blame material; they don't see the spiritual and mental side of American supremacy; they think that inventions like the telephone and the aeroplane and wireless—no, that was a Wop invention, but anyway; they think these mechanical improvements are all we stand for; whereas to a real thinker, he sees that spiritual and, uh, dominating movements like Efficiency, and Rotarianism, and Democracy are what compose our deepest and truest wealth."

As there aren't many unreal, forced speeches like that, it would be unfair to give Sinclair Lewis anything less than a Ty Cobb batting average in the Satire League.

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A PARALLEL.

"In fact, there was but one thing wrong with the Babbitt house: It was not a home."—*From "Babbitt."*

"The trouble with this house, Rosalie, is that it's not a home."—*From "This Freedom."*

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ANOTHER PARALLEL.

"I've never yet done anything that gave me any satisfaction."—*The hero of Willa Cather's "One of Ours."*

"I've never done a single thing I wanted to in my whole life."—*The hero of "Babbitt."*

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FOLDEROL.

Said Sidney Dark to Stewart White,
"Our names a joshing pome invite."..
"Such wit is older than the Ark,"
Said Stewart White to Sidney Dark.

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Despite which remark of Mr. White's here's a paragraph to say that his "On Tiptoe" (Doran) is a good yarn. As it mentions only the Rolls-Royce, Pierce-Arrow and Locomobile, it isn't as comprehensive an automobile catalogue as some other recent books (for instance, Roland Pertwee's "Men of Affairs," which mentions the Vauxhall, Siddeley, Rolls-Royce, Wolsely, Hispano Suisa and Ford), but aside from this shortcoming it can hold its own with most romances of recent months. . . . At that, in the matter of listing automobiles Mr. White has done better than Sinclair Lewis has in "Babbitt." As we recall the matter, Mr. Lewis mentions only the Packard and the Ford.

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HILDA SCORES AGAIN.

More perfumed poetry has been written about Joan of Arc than any figure in world history. And in most cases all that the bards have succeeded in saying was that the far famed Joan was a noble female—*sans peur et sans reproche.* Which, after all, isn't a very original thought.

Most of it has been adjectival poetry, with everything in the thesaurus under "glorious" brought into play. For added effect there has been a liberal sprinkling of exclamation points—hundreds of 'em. Then, to strike the proper note of reverence, "thees" and "thous" have been called upon for overtime work. The Joan of Arc of poetry is a mythological figure; it is impossible to visualize her as a real person. Even the movie directors have done a better job than the poets.

And now along comes little Hilda Conkling in "Shoes of the Wind" (Stokes) with a delicate bit of verse that gives us a glimpse of a flesh-and-blood Joan, with emotions and all, by gosh! In eight lines Hilda accomplishes more than the lilac-water poets have done in interminable odes. Here they are:

If I were Jeanne d'Arc
It would be hard remembering the apple orchard in bloom,
With nothing about me but noise and armies,
All men, all women, unhappy,
No time for children (let them be quiet!)
No time for anybody
But kings. . . .
And the apple trees all the time wondering. . . .

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Little Hilda's publishers are to be commended for resisting the temptation to ballyhoo her as a child wonder. It is her poetry that counts, not her age. The volume is dignifiedly presented; there is no circus poster blurb, as in the case of some books by children, and the result is that the reader thinks of Hilda as a poet and not as a likely exhibit for a dime museum or the freak section of the Barnum & Bailey sideshows.

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"OCEAN ECHOES."

A choice bit of maritime philosophy from Arthur Mason's merrily blustery "Ocean Echoes": "When one sang, they all sang. In a fight everybody joined in, and, after the fight, when the broken pieces were swept away and the scalp wounds had been plastered they would all drink together and be friends again."

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DE LUXE EDITIONS.

Nothing that has taken place in the publishing world in a long time has made us so envious as the announcement that the first edition of Willa Cather's "One of Ours" consisted of thirty-five copies on Imperial Japan vellum and 310 copies on Perusia handmade Italian paper. We have called the matter to the attention of our publishers, with the result that the first edition of our next book will consist of forty-three copies carved in Connecticut birch bark, seventy-nine copies burnt in Russian handmade leather and 401 copies embroidered, with spun gold, on purple taffeta.

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A few months ago we wrote for *The Book Factory* a thing called "Plaint of a Radi-oaf," versified nonsense about radio books. The Toronto *Star* reprinted the pome and forgot to credit THE NEW YORK HERALD. Then the *Radio Digest* reprinted it and credited the Toronto *Star*. But like Omar, we are willing to "take the cash—(*you don't realize how much money we poets make!*)—and let the credit go."

Thoroughbreds and Their Tricks

Continued from Preceding Page

he'll sulk all the way around and travel as slow as a pony."

All racegoers of a decade ago know about Robin Hood's fondness for beer. He was a good sprinter and won many races, but Johnny Mayberry says he never ran well unless he had a bucket of beer before going to the post. He also whinnied on his return from a race until he got another bucket. When Robin Hood was racing Mayberry lived in Sheepshead Bay and to get to and from the Gravesend and Sheepshead tracks it was necessary to walk horses through the streets and pass Mayberry's home. When he got him in front of that house he would pull up and wouldn't budge until one of Mayberry's family came out and gave him some beer.

George Reed holds Viley, now racing in the south, as the strangest horse he has ever seen.

"To frequenters at the New Orleans track Viley is known as the guideless wonder," says Reed. "Jack Phillips has him trained like a dog. Phillips sends him out to gallop without a rider and when he thinks he has gone far enough he gives a shrill whistle through his fingers. The horse hears it, stops galloping instantly and returns to his barn."

Tom Healey, who looks after R. T. Wilson's string, recalls the doings of Kinnikinic. Ed Nash had charge of him and in the mornings when Healey would tell Nash to take him home, Kinnikinic would start without being guided. When Nash was told to work him the colt would start to fight and it would take several men to get him to the post.

George Carroll, the jockey, says The Turk wouldn't work until he had a chew of tobacco, and this colt would chew a whole plug while being cooled out after a race or a workout.

Sam Hildreth had two horses, Joe Madden and Firestone, which hated each other. So violent was the mutual dislike that it was impossible to bring them on the track together for work or races. They knew each other two hundred yards away and only an iron chain could hold them from running at each other.

The Finn, the famous black horse of H. C. Hallenback, understood only one language. It was the curses of the negro stable boys. One day his negro rubber went to Ed Heffernan, the trainer, and asked him to be transferred to another horse. The trainer was surprised at any groom wanting to give up the care of a champion and asked the reason. The negro replied:

"Well, you see, boss, I went to church yesterday and I made my peace with God and man and I promised I wouldn't cuss no more. This morning I started to work on that black devil and cause I didn't cuss him he tried to kill me. I tried him several times but each time he ran me out of the stall."

Walter House has a saddle horse he calls King, which does the work of a shepherd dog. He watches all of the horses in his stable and when one of them is missing he cries until he is whipped. He accompanies his stablemates to the paddock and if any outsider goes near his charges he tries to kick or bite him. When his charges go to the post he whinnies for them until they return. Last summer at the Empire City track he stood on the hill near the jockey's room while Sweep By was in a race. When the flock of horses in the race went past him he recognized Sweep By and began crying at the top of his lungs.

Tom Welsh, who has charge of Joseph E. Widener's horses, had a filly that could run like the wind but which refused to race. She worked fast in the mornings but it was a physical impossibility to get her on the track for a race. She was Cherryola, the dam of the great Purchase. With her Welsh believed he would win the rich and historic Spinaway Stakes. She acted like a lamb the morning of the stake but when he attempted to put a saddle on her in the paddock in the afternoon she threw herself on the ground on her back and refused to get up until the saddle was removed from her sight. The trainer asked for permission to saddle her on the track, the request was granted and the horse was held on her legs while the tack was arranged. Then Jack Martin was thrown on her back and she was turned loose. She didn't run, nor jump, nor kick. She just lay down and rolled on her back. Martin had a narrow escape. The stewards saw her antics and ordered her off the track and out of the race.

Frank Regan had a pair, Dorcas and Whimsy, which were more like circus horses than runners.

"All I'd have to do was to hum a two-step and they'd dance as well as any dancing horse you ever saw on any stage. Whimsy and Dorcas knew my voice and if they were turned loose in a field, a call from me would bring both of them on the run."

There have been thousands of mean and bad and savage horses, but it is a saying on the turf that all children, drunks and the irresponsible are immune.

The writer saw Louis Feustel's three little children make a circus horse out of Dream of the Valley. They pulled his tongue, made him "shake hands," pulled his tail and lie down so that they could sit on his stomach. If their father or any of his employees attempted to go near him without a strap or a stick, he'd run them out of the stall.

The late Jacob Ruppert, father of the president of the New York Yankees, had a horse named Sport. He was a vicious fellow. All of the stable hands were afraid of him. One day he ran away and when the grooms caught up with him he was in a school yard playing with a dozen children.

Jim Fitzsimmons says he had a horse named King Idol that was mean and a world's champion kicker. Fitz swears that when King Idol kicked he never missed, but that his victims always were horsemen. He wouldn't bother a child or a stranger.

A score of years ago Walter House had a horse named Bashaw, Jr. He killed two men. One day a new groom left his stall door open and a little girl walked into it. The savage horse was eating at the time and at meal times a bad horse is really at his worst. But this fellow paid no attention to the little girl. He even ate an ear of corn out of her hand.